

**State Soil Conservation Board
CWI Grants Committee
August 7, 2007**

Present:

Members – Jim Cherry, Bill Mann and Warren Baird
ISDA Staff – Tammy Lawson, Jerod Chew, Jim Lake, Rob Brown, George Reger,
Tara Wesseler-Henry, and Cassandra Vondran

Discussion:

- *Spreading the funds through several areas might be good
- *Some still really like the CWI Grants Program
- *Hiring a lot of people might not be the best
- *There's a need for some additional people because of all the backlog and on-going potential for additional programs
- *Rent for SWCDs is a concern
- *Problem with the \$10,000 since it seems like an entitlement and could be a problem when trying to get future funding
- *Don't need to make a firm decision by the 14th.
- *Leveraging money by having it available for other programs like 319 and LARE
- *Nutrient mgmt and livestock are hot issues that might help conservation draw attention.
- *Technical assistance part – no doubt it's needed.
- *Cost share program through CWI funding is wanted and could be supported
- *Favor giving SWCDs more than \$10,000
- *The training incentive should be enhanced with specific allotments
- *Rent expense is a huge issue, example Allen County's bill is \$28,000
- *How do we assist troubled Districts but encourage the good performers?
- *Having a dragon or T by 2000 goal could really help everyone see the potential and focus their resources

CWI Report:

Based on input from the area meetings and partners;

Recommend the idea of "Watershed Administrators" be discontinued.

Training grants to Districts be increased in funding and revised in requirements.

Establish funding for the Indiana Conservation Leadership Institute.

The multi-year grant categories (Clearinghouse Coordinator and Regional Technician) be eliminated.

Existing Grant categories be updated and revised if needed to meet accountability expectations.

Work with IDEM to leverage current Division and CWI projects match 319 requirements or establish a new Grant Category allowing Districts to apply for a portion of the match required by other grants (such as 319, LARE, etc).

Consider establishing a "Grant Category/Cost Share" program for Nutrient Management.

Expect ALL partners to treat each other with respect and refrain from making conclusions that are not fact. ALL partners have an important stake in the results and it is important that each support the outcome, realizing that the final decision may not satisfy all, but with knowledge that ALL had an opportunity for input and were heard.

Executive Committee Meeting Report
August 2, 2007

Some Observations from Input Sessions and other thoughts

1. Morale concerns throughout Partnership.
2. Do other partners look at ISDA as too young to be trusted?
3. Some Districts are really concerned with soil, water, urban issues, watersheds, no-till, program marketing and technical assistance.
4. Others seem to have a high level of concern about how to meet their current financial obligations.
5. Is it too much about the dollars and who has control of programs?
6. The conservation message gets lost in the broad topic of Clean Water Indiana.
7. Need a more specific definition of "water quality" or at least the parts of water quality that the Conservation Partnership can focus on and do something about.
8. Ask SWCD's and other stakeholders what the issues are – review SWCD business plans.
9. Sometimes we try to slay dragons before we know what they are.
10. Dragons might be nutrients, sediment, invasive species, erosion energy conservation, etc.

Recommendations.

1. CREP – CREP was never on the table for elimination but the SSCB should reaffirm its support for current CREP and for future expansion in a logical and progressive way.
2. Leadership Institute - Executive Committee recommends full implementation of the Institute proposal by assigning a current staff member the lead responsibility of the statewide Institute and that District Support Specialists be fully involved with helping lead the efforts at the regional level. We further recommend that a revolving fund of \$15,000 to \$25,000 of CWI funds be established to implement the Institute.
3. The Executive Committee recommends the Training Incentive grant be increased from \$750 to \$1,000.
4. The Executive Committee recommends the matching operations grant to each SWCD be increased by a minimum of \$1,000, providing local match is available.
5. The Executive Committee recommends the SSCB delay further decisions regarding CWI until a task force of partnership members and the State Technical Committee helps determine a focus for the CWI Initiative. This focus would then serve as the basis for future CWI grants, ISDA employment or other means of implementing the CWI focus.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Report 8-07-07

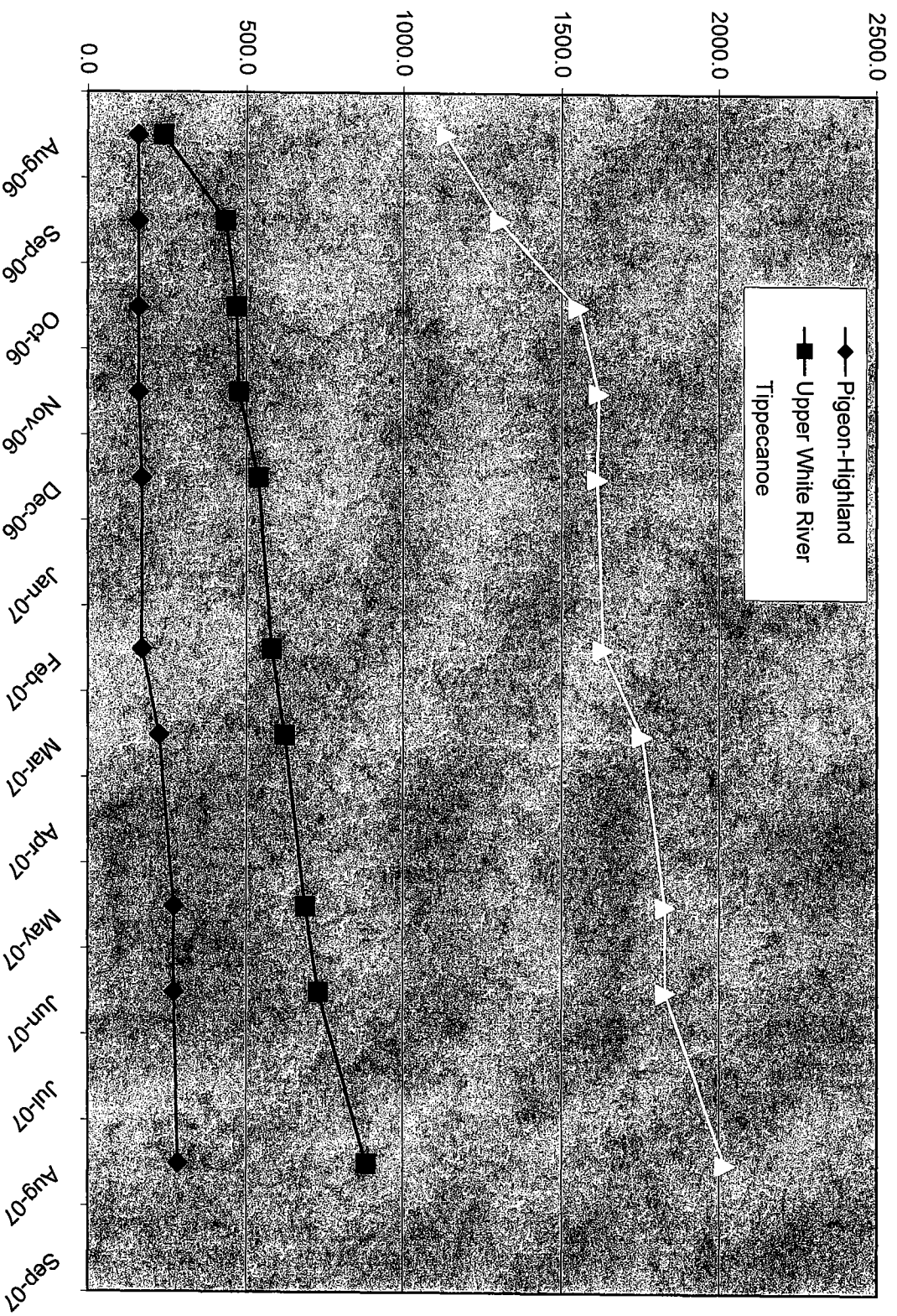
August 7, 2007

<u>Watersheds</u>	<u>Contracts</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Obligated Funds</u>
Tippecanoe River	292	2017.7	\$281,100.00
Upper White River	120	883.6	\$415,590.00
Pigeon/Highland Rivers	88	283.8	\$38,310.00
TOTAL	500	3185.10	\$735,000.00

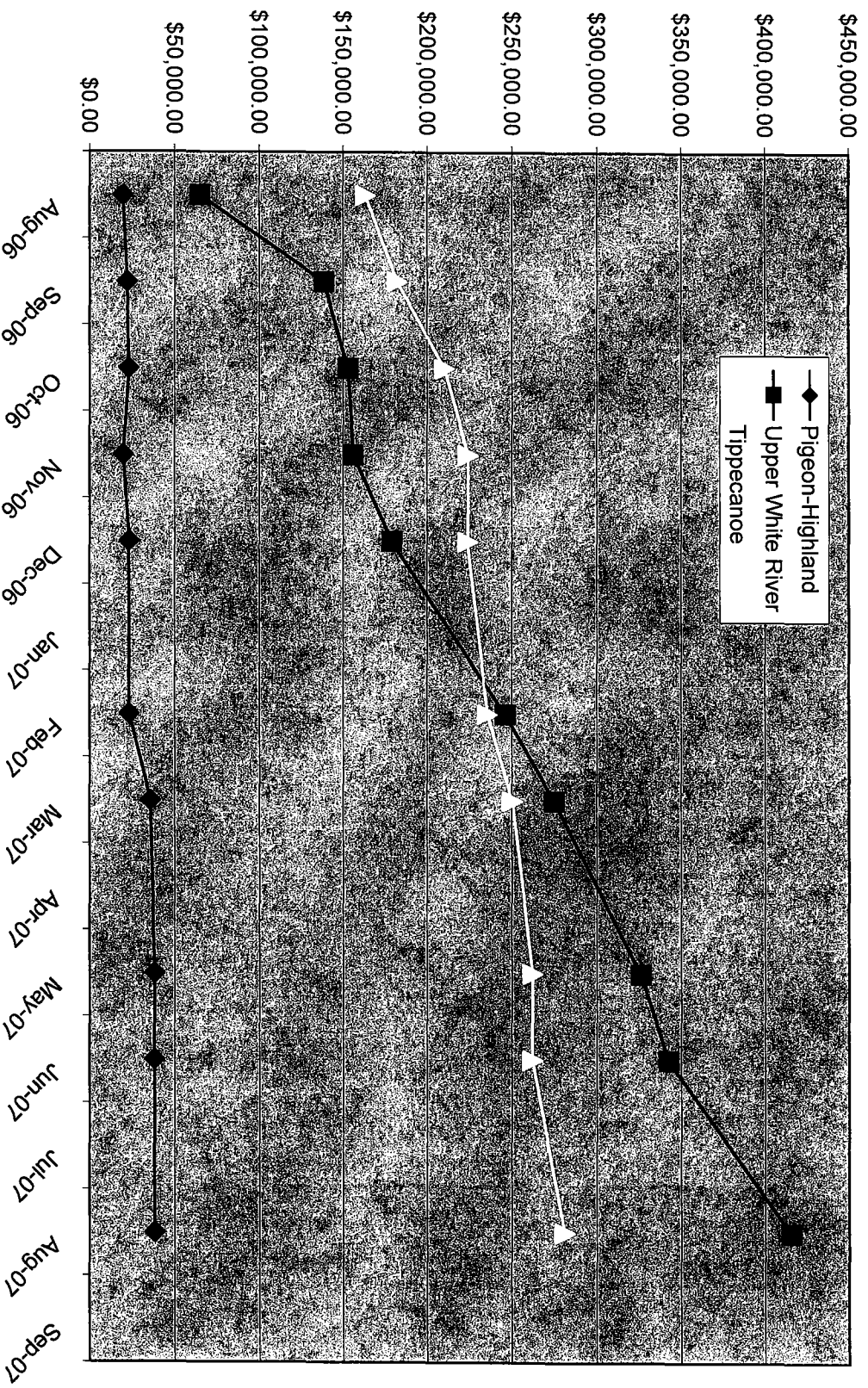
June 5, 2007

<u>Watersheds</u>	<u>Contracts</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Obligated Funds</u>
Tippecanoe River	269	1828.50	\$262,180.00
Upper White River	101	729.50	\$342,670.00
Pigeon/Highland Rivers	84	270.60	\$38,310.00
TOTAL	454	2828.60	\$643,160.00

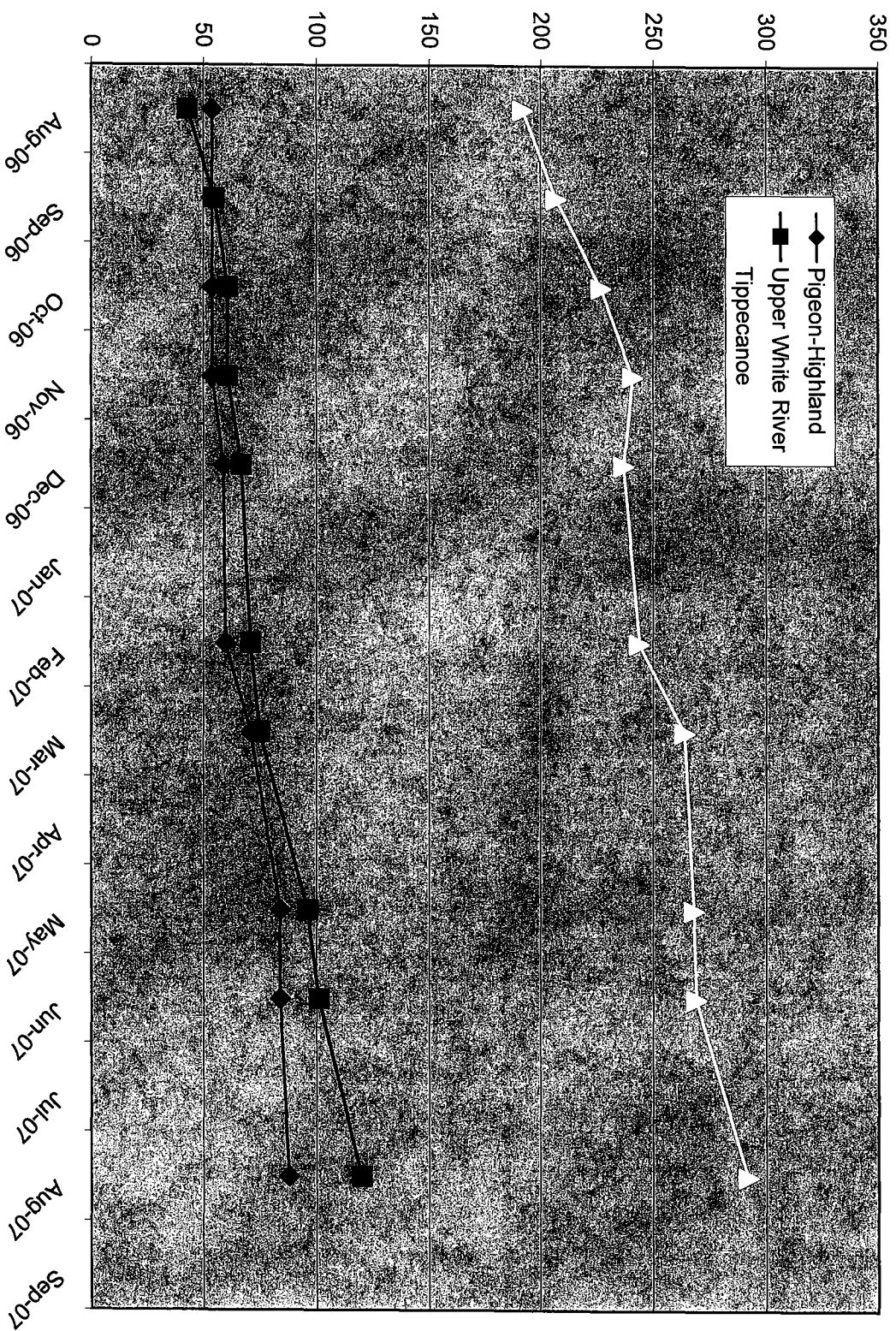
CREP Obligated Acres August 2006 - August 2007



CREP Obligated Funds August 2006 - August 2007



CREP Landowners Contracts August 2006 - August 2007



Clean Water Indiana Grant Report for the Month of August

CWI 2006

- There are 19 closed grants from CWI 06. These districts have completed their projects, submitted their final reports and have received their funding. Of these 19 grants; 4 were Unique Partnerships and 15 were Program Marketing.
- To date the total amount of funds paid out to districts from CWI 06 grants is \$359,221.50
- Thus far \$2,014 has been recommitted. This includes districts that projects were under budgets, or funding reallocations denied by the SSCB.

CWI 2007

- There are 2 closed grants from CWI 2007, Floyd and Fayette counties, both were Program Marketing grants and they total \$3,400.
- To date \$326,096.87 has been paid out of 07 funds to the districts

Total funding paid out for both 06 and 07 CWI grants is \$685,318.37 and that money is going to 67 different counties in the state.

The last round of quarterly reports were due July 1st.

State Soil Conservation Board DNR Report August 14, 2007

The IDNR Division of Forestry is currently accepting applications for their 2007 urban forestry "Putting Trees to Work" grants. The Division of Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service sponsor the program. Its purpose is to assist municipalities and not-for-profit organizations in initiating and developing community forestry programs by purchasing and planting trees, assessing the condition, and managing the urban forest and associated urban natural resources. Deadline is September 30, 2007. Information and applications can be found at the division's website: www.in.gov/dnr/forestry.

The Division of Forestry is also in the process of finalizing their 2008-2012 Strategic Plans. You can view the draft versions of these plans at their website.

In order for state wildlife agencies to receive federal funds through the State Wildlife Grants program and the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration program, each state wildlife agency had to develop a comprehensive wildlife action plan that met specific criteria. The Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife spent over a 1 ½ years seeking input and developing their plan. Indiana's plan has been reviewed and approved, and is available on their website: www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild. The plan specifically focuses on species at risk and their associated habitats.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife has a new shooting range at Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area and it is a state-of-the-art facility. It features a 66 station pistol and rifle range, a shotgun shooting area with 4 combination trap and skeet fields. The new public range was built using federal Pitman-Roberson funds (tax on sporting arms and ammunition) to provide a safe and fun environment for shooters of all ages to come and enjoy the shooting sports. The facility is being run by a very knowledgeable shooting sports concessionaire and we are expecting to host many state and national shooting events at this facility in the future.

Indiana's draft SAFE proposal will be reviewed at the September NRCS State Technical Committee meeting. If approved, the proposal will allow for 13,100 acres to be enrolled through Continuous CRP enrollment beginning January 1, 2008 in grassland, timber and wetland practices. Prior to January 1, fact sheets on the specifics of each eligible practice will be developed and distributed to the various partners to assist landowners understand the program and the particular requirements of each practice.

IDEM REPORT, WATERSHED PLANNING BRANCH
SSCB Meeting, 8/14/2007

Submitted by Marylou Renshaw

319/TMDL Section *

Section 319

- ◆ The 2007 Section 319 Grant is awaiting EPA approval; we anticipate approval within a month.
- ◆ EPA Section 319 Program review concluded the week of August 10th. The primary measure by which the 319 Program will be evaluated is demonstrating environmental results through improved water quality. Fiscal responsibility remains essential.
- ◆ The Section 319 Annual Report is due by September 15th. Partner updates are needed by August 31st.
- ◆ MS4/319 Guidance is drafted and under review.
- ◆ Staffing:
 - We are pleased to announce that Crystal Rehder has begun her duties as a Section 319 Project Manager. She formerly worked for the Nature Conservancy.
 - We are in the process of hiring the last vacancy in the Program; thus, anticipate being fully staffed by mid-September.

TMDL

- ◆ Section chief attended the ORSANCO/USEPA meeting on the Ohio River bacteria TMDL. Concerns remain regarding the overall approach to modeling pollutant loads. Public meetings will likely begin on this TMDL in early 2008.
- ◆ As of August 1st, 555 TMDLs have been approved for 2,696.33 stream miles.

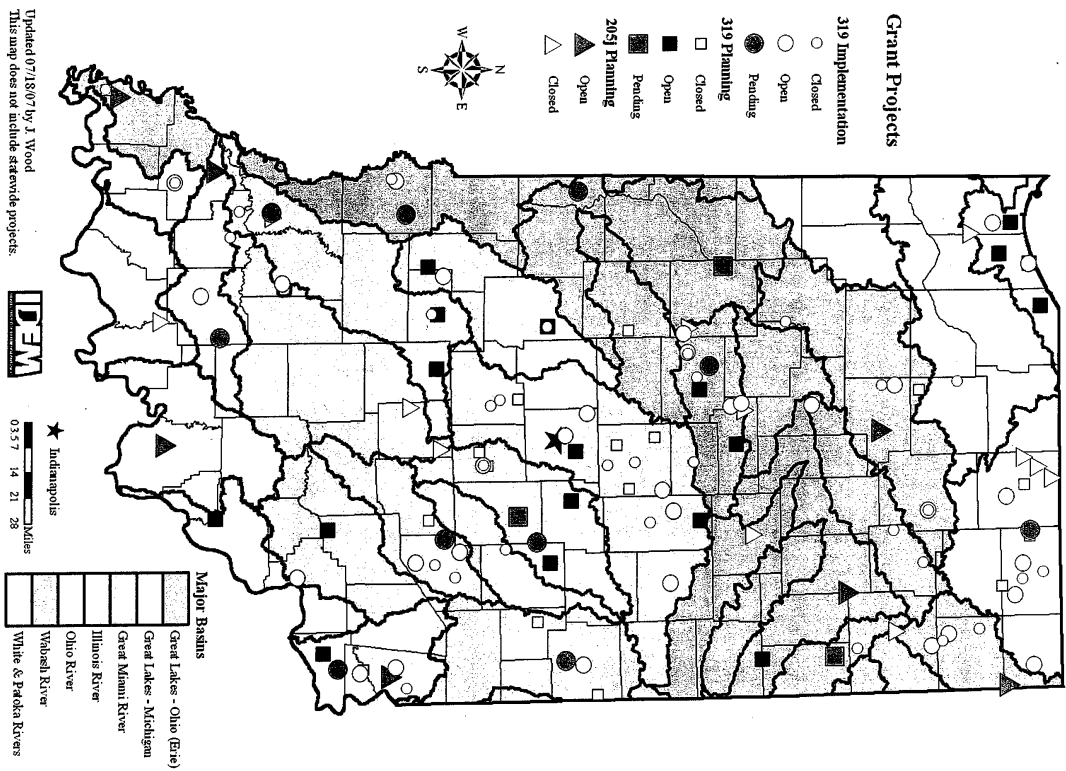
Wetlands/Storm Water Section

Storm Water

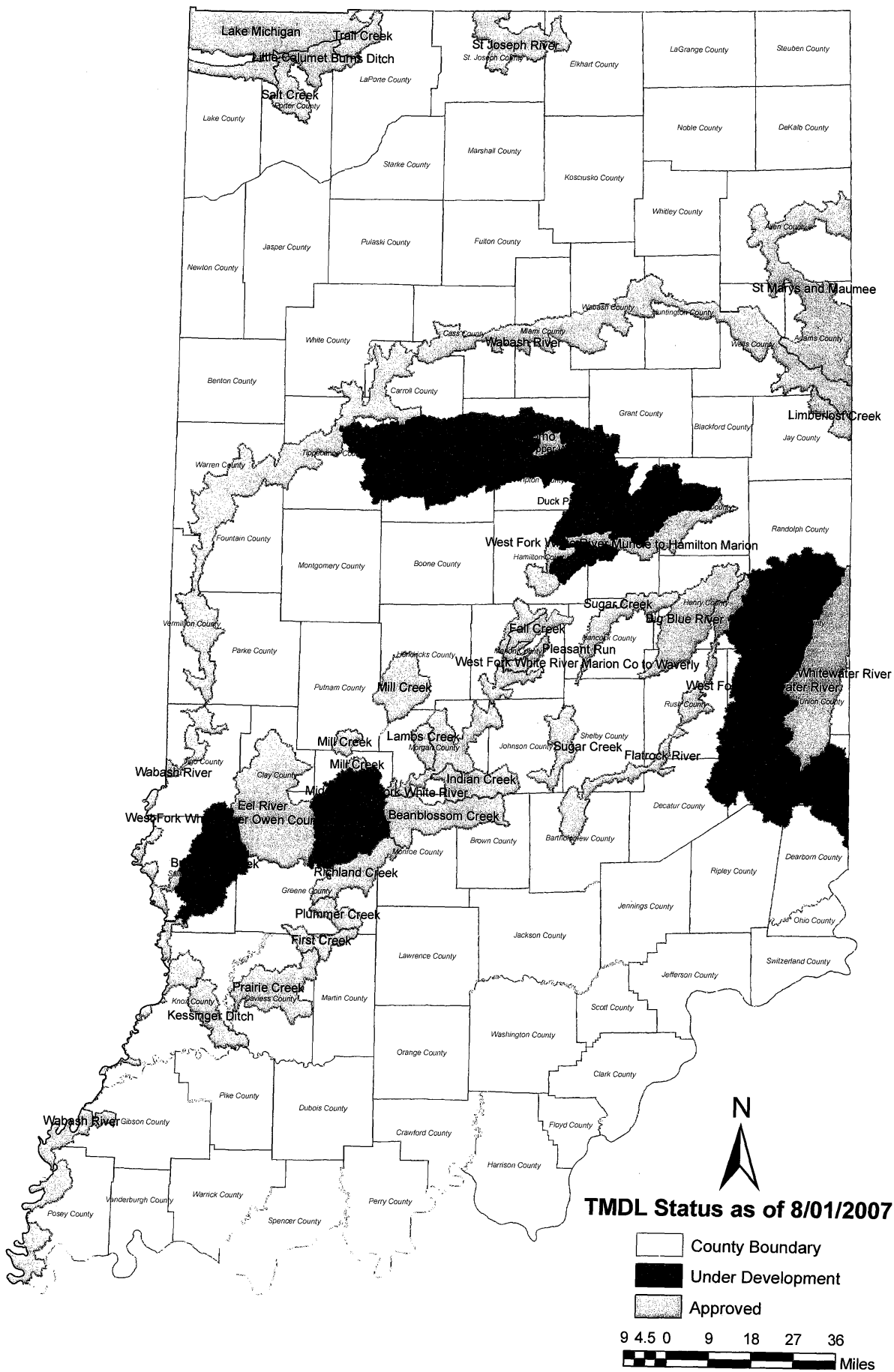
- ◆ Since May 1st, staff has completed the following:
 - 103 new site evaluations
 - 135 site re-evaluations (follow-ups)
 - 56 plan reviews
 - 7 referrals to enforcement
- ◆ Reggie Korthals is the new MS4 coordinator and David Carr is the new Rule 5 coordinator.
- ◆ *Indiana's Storm Water Quality Manual* is under review by the assistant commissioner, OWQ.
- ◆ Total audience outreach = 185 persons.

* Project Maps attached.

Geographic Location of Section 319 & 205j Projects (FFY 2001 - 2007)



TMDL Project Status





**Indiana Association of
Soil and Water
Conservation Districts**

Protecting and enhancing Indiana's soil
and water resources for all Hoosiers



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To: State Soil Conservation Board

From: Jim Droege, President, IASWCD

Date: Tuesday, August 14, 2007

CWI Funding

President and region directors contacted the 92 districts and encouraged them to attend the CWI Region meetings as well as submit written recommendations to the SSCB. A number of Region directors held teleconferences so that Districts could ask questions and help get information clarified.

NACD Summer Meeting

Gene Weaver and Jim Droege attended the NACD summer board meeting in Washington, DC at which the NACD altered their bylaws and committee structure.

The NACD legislative conference followed the summer board meeting. Jennifer Boyle, Ray McCormick and Jim Droege visited with the members of Indiana's congressional delegation and discussed the conservation title of the farm bill. Additionally, discussion was held concerning conservation technical assistance as part of the conservation operations account, particularly the need to fund the CO account at 930 million in next fiscal years appropriations. Ray McCormick and Jim Droege also had the opportunity to meet with Chuck Connors at USDA. They discussed the need for active management on WRP projects and Ray left a white paper he'd written on possible farm bill incentives for long term no-till farming.

Wednesday morning, July 25, NACD held a workshop sponsored by the urban and coastal committee. Jim Droege attended this workshop which focused on emerging cliental of SWCD's.

Pathway to Water Quality

Most shifts have been filled for the PWQ exhibit. On Wednesday, August 15, 76 Hoosiers will be recognized as River Friendly Farmers. The program will feature Dave Russell, Indiana Farm Director, Brownfield Radio Network as Master of Ceremonies. Tammy Lawson, Director, ISDA Division of Soil Conservation will be presenting Blue Ribbons to the recipients followed by Don Villwock, President Indiana Farm Bureau, Inc. who will present Certificates to the recipients. The program will begin at 2:00 p.m. at the 4-H Exhibit Hall Auditorium - 2nd floor.

THE IASWCD MISSION is to represent SWCDs as one voice and assist the leadership of local Districts through coordination and education for the wise use and management of our natural resources.

**State Soil Conservation Board Meeting
NRCS State Conservationist Report
August 14, 2007**

Farm Bill Update

The House Agriculture Committee 2007 Farm Bill was posted on July 27, 2007. The House of Representatives passed H.R. 2419 by a vote of 231-191. The language is available at <http://thomas.loc.gov/> by typing HR2419 in the "Search Bill Text", selecting Bill Number, and pressing search. Three versions of the bill will be listed, select the third version (Engrossed as Agreed to or Passed by House).

The Senate is expected to begin working on their version of the bill in September. Both the Senate and House of Representatives are on recess until Tuesday, September 4, 2007.

Programs Update

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program- Approximately \$416,000 received and 32 contracts funded. There are 97 applications in backlog for approximately \$1,000,000.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program- Approximately \$11,000,000 received and 650 contracts have been funded. All applications with planning and cost estimates completed were funded.

Wetlands Reserve Program- \$9,119,448 received and 41 contracts funded (4,216 acres).

Ground and Surface Water Program- Approximately \$235,000 received and 15 contracts approved.

Conservation Security Program- All 2007 CSP contracts will receive their final payment in a few weeks. There will be a national CSP workshop held in Indianapolis in September to prepare for the 2008 program, which may involve the watersheds that were approved in 2007. Indiana's approved 2007 watershed is the Upper East Fork of the White River.

USDA Office Consolidations

Farm Service Agency has held public meetings in the ten counties under consideration for FSA office consolidations. Once FSA has made final decisions about their office consolidations, NRCS will then analyze the best options for NRCS operations. Any decisions to consolidate NRCS operations will be made in consultation with the local DCs and SWCDs involved.

Congressman Donnelly Tour in St. Joseph County

NRCS and the St. Joseph SWCD Board hosted the Congressman on a tour showcasing conservation practices in the field. The Congressman learned about the purpose and outcome of various practices, and which Farm Bill Programs support them. The tour was also an opportunity to explain the role of the SWCD and the positive impact of locally-led conservation.

Personnel Updates

The following recent selections have been made:

District Conservationist in Brookville: Clint Harrison

District Conservationist in Brownstown: Chris Downing

District Conservationist in Monticello: Daniel Davis

District Conservationist in Washington: Joe Williams

District Conservationist in Franklin: Tony Branam

Resource Management Specialist at the Southeast Area Office: Brian Ingmire

Ag Engineer at the Southeast Area Office: Tyler Martindale